

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES – APRIL 21, 2004

Chairman Tim Lambert called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

**Approval for Minutes from March 2004 Meeting**

- March meeting minutes were approved without changes.

**Secretary C. Ronald Franks and Assistant Secretary Michael Slattery**

- Assistant Secretary Michael Slattery introduced Secretary Franks and Deputy Secretary W. P. Jensen.
- Natural Resources Police and State Police merger discussion took place. Also discussion on merger of NRP and State Forest and Park Service Rangers.
- Secretary Franks discussed three key issues with the WAC members: Bay Water Quality, Bay Grasses, and Bay Oysters.
  - 1) The Department is taking necessary steps to improve water quality to restore the Bay grasses, oysters, and to restore Maryland's ecosystem to a balance.
  - 2) Commissioner Dollar is willing to support the Department needs in getting the Tributaries Strategic Plan for Maryland approved.
  - 3) Group discussion on Bear Hunt Proposal.
    - (a) The bear hunt is one of the tools that will be used to manage the bear population in Western Maryland Regional area, and having a manage hunt is a small element of the Black Bear Management Plan.
    - (b) Commissioner Lamp distributed documents to the group to support his opposition to Maryland's bear hunt proposals. Commissioner Lamp indicated, "There is not one iota of evidence supporting a need for the DNR to open a generalized hunt for black bears in Maryland."
    - (c) The Department will continue to manage the bear population by means of non-lethal methods and lethal methods.
    - (d) The Department desires to maintain a healthy and manageable bear population in Maryland.
    - (e) The \$75,000 offer from the Fund for Animals and the Humane Society of U. S. was contingent on stopping the bear hunt. The Department could not accept the offer with the accompanying restriction.
- Assistant Mike Slattery met with the Teaming With Wildlife (TWW) Coalition representatives and Department Natural Resources (DNR) Commission members to discuss formalizing a TWW relationship.
  - 1) Initially, the notion was to enter into a formal agreement such as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
  - 2) The group decided to develop a sub-committee to report to the Wildlife Advisory Commission (WAC).
  - 3) The sub-committee charge is to address the following items:
    - (a) Non-game wildlife species
    - (b) Endangered species
    - (c) Bio-Diversity Conservation
    - (d) Aquatic Communities
  - 4) Glenn Therres, Associate Director of the Heritage Program will research the process for the establishment of a sub-committee.
  - 5) Once TWW and DNR agree on the logistics, Glenn Therres will present the information to the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
- Chairman Lambert thanked Secretary Franks, Deputy Secretary Jensen, and Assistant Secretary Michael Slattery for attending.

**Final Seasons and Bag Limits Proposals (Game Program Staff)**

- Bear Hunt – From the five public meetings and mailed/emailed comments, staff were able to incorporate some suggestions into the proposals such as no scent attractants, no electronic calls permitted, non-hunting personnel to escort hunters into or out of a bear-hunting area, and one bear per permit, so that means that the hunting partners must maintain **VISUAL** contact.
- Motion to accept DNR's Black Bear Proposals.
  - 1) Commissioner Pascal seconded that motion. Motion was carried with Commissioner Lamp strongly opposing.

- 2) Commissioner Lamp handed out a request to segregate and postpone WAC's vote on the proposed bear-hunting season from the DNR's 2004-2006 "Final Seasons and Bag Limits" proposals [Attachment A].
- 3) Chairman Lambert removed the motion regarding accepting DNR's Black Bear Proposals off the table.
- Motion to segregate the proposed bear hunting season from DNR's 2004-2006 "Final Seasons and Bag Limits" proposals.
  - 1) Commissioner Pascal seconded the motion. Motion was carried with 6-supporters and 1-obstained.
  - 2) Motion was passed.
- Motion to postpone the Wildlife Advisory Commission vote on the proposed bear hunting season to the future.
  - 1) No one seconded Commissioner Lamp motion.
  - 2) Motion was not carried.
- Motion to accept DNR's regulations and proposals for the black bear hunting season with the four changes outlined at this meeting.
  - 1) Commissioner Adams seconded the motion.
  - 2) Motion was passed with 6-supporters and 1-against.
- Chairman Lambert contacted Commissioners regarding adding a question to the public comment period about having the bow season start two weeks earlier and subsequently, closing the bow season two weeks earlier.
  - 1) Staff received strong opposition from the archery hunting community.
  - 2) Some members from the fox chaser community and small game hunters were concerned that expanding deer seasons have hurt their opportunities.
  - 3) WHS staff will review this recommendation and hopefully be able to develop a compromise in the future.
- The Game Program staff outlined the 2004-2006 Hunting Proposals Comments [Attachment B].
  - 1) Proposed Hunting and Trapping Regulations for both 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 Hunting License Years [Attachment C] were presented to the Commissioners.
    - (a) Baltimore, Howard, Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince Georges counties will retain bow hunter zones with unlimited antlerless deer.
    - (b) The recommendation to maintain unlimited antlerless deer during the bow season for the above counties was suggested by the public.
  - 2) Doug Hotton presented to WAC the Maryland Total Deer Harvest from 1989-2003 Antlered and Antlerless by County [Attachment D].
    - (a) The way to control deer numbers is the taking of antlerless deer and de-emphasizing the taking of antlered deer. By doing this, it would positive results in managing deer population.
    - (b) The data demonstrated that the buck harvest index to total deer numbers have not changed in four years---suggesting that hunters are beginning to take more antlerless deer and we are beginning to see leveling-off of deer populations in some parts of Md.
    - (c) It is difficult to manage deer population in suburban and urban areas.
    - (d) Maryland Reported Antlered & Antlerless Deer Harvest by County for the Bow, Firearms, and Muzzleloader 2003-2004 Hunting Seasons [Attachment E].
  - 3) The Game Program will arrange a press release summarizing the 2004-2005 and the 2005-2006 hunting seasons.
  - 4) Robert Colona presented the changes to the Furbearer Regulations, which will increase recreational hunting opportunities without adversely affecting the furbearer species population [Attachment F].
  - 5) There are no changes to the Webless Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits.
  - 6) There are no changes to the Upland Game Seasons and Bags Limits.
  - 7) Early Resident Canada Goose Seasons and Bag Limits staff proposed several changes [Attachment B].
    - (a) WHS approved of Atlantic Flyaway Council recommendations to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
      - (i) Use of electronic calls
      - (ii) Extending the hunting hours to ½ hour after sunset
      - (iii) Use of unplug shotgun
      - (iv) August hunting
    - (b) Most hunters opposed all of the changes except for extending the hunting hours to ½ hour after sunset.

**2004 WAC Working Agenda**

- Chairman Lambert moved the Natural Heritage Fund agenda item to the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Urban Wildlife Subcommittee was deleted from the June 16<sup>th</sup> agenda. Commissioner Lamp will provide an Urban Wildlife Subcommittee document with the operational guidelines.

**State Forest & Park Service Update**

- No Report

**Natural Resources Police Update**

- Presentation by Sergeant Charron
  - 1) Sergeant Charron provided a summary of Natural Resources Police activity from March 15, 2004 through April 18, 2004 [Attachment G].
  - 2) Turkey Season opened and no significant reports from Prince Georges County and Anne Arundel County.
  - 3) Director Paul A. Peditto thanked NRP for providing support at the public hearing, which were located in each region of the State.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Update**

- Presentation by Kurt Fuchs, Maryland Farm Bureau (MFB) Representative
- This is MFB slowest time of the year.
- Most of the MFB wildlife complaints are geese sculling the fields after planting.
- Kurt Fuchs will provide information on MFB's constituencies as relate to cover crops. MFB is a supporter of the Cover Crop Program.

**Old Business**

- Mark Hoffman, Associate Director of WHS provided a hand-out on WHS Tracking Legislation – 2004 [Attachment H].
- Budget Bill – the initial Department budget was presented to the Department of Legislative Service with \$470,000 in General Funds to WHS. In the end, WHS receive a \$235,000 dollar cut in General Funds for the 2005 Fiscal Year.

**New Business**

- Chairman Tim Lambert resigned as Chairman and as a member of the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
- Commissioner Adams nominated Commissioner Christopher Dollar as the new chairman.
  - 1) Commissioner Pascal moved that the nomination be closed.
  - 2) Motion carried.
  - 3) Commissioner Dollar was elected as the new Chairman of the Wildlife Advisory Commission.
  - 4) Commissioners thanked Mr. Lambert for his dedication and outstanding job in chairing the WAC. Mr. Lambert will be truly missed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

**Attendance**

Members:	L. Adams, C. Dollar, G. Fratz, L. Julio, T. Lambert, J. Lamp, R. Pascal
Guests:	K. Fuchs, WJZ News Cast, Secretary Franks, Deputy Secretary Jensen, Assistant Secretary M. Slattery
Staff:	K. Blizzard, R. Charron, R. Colona, B. Harvey, L. Hindman, M. Hoffman, D. Hotton, J. McKnight, P. Peditto, T. Spencer
Absent:	R. Gregory, M. Scarborough, C. Garner